DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 387 765 CG 026 574

AUTHOR Marcus, Margery
TITLE An English Classroom-Based Approach for Connecting College-Bound Sophomores to the World of Work.
PUB DATE 95
NOTE 72p.; Ed.D. Practicum, Nova Southeastern University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Awareness; Career Choice; Career Counseling; *Career Development; Career Exploration; Career Guidance; Career Information Systems; *College Bound Students; *Education Work Relationship; *English Curriculum; Grade 10; High Schools; High School Students; Job Skills; Occupational Information; School Guidance
IDENTIFIERS *High School Sophomores

ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to help college-bound sophomores make connections between English class and the world of work so that they could make informed decisions about college and career choices. The target population was 90 honors-level 10th grade English students on an interdisciplinary team. The setting was a predominately middle class, suburban high school. The writer used a combination of strategies to connect students to the workforce. She designed a shadowing program matching students for a day with career professionals, developed an employability skills portfolio model, organized an in-school Career Day, and arranged for students to access software matching their interests to college options. Analysis of the data revealed students' ability to cite career choices based on reasons other than prestige and media stereotypes. Additionally, they were able to describe realistically a typical day in the career of their choice, and to document at least eight skills necessary to success in English and success in the workplace. Appendices include selected course materials, parents' survey, and sample interview questions. Contains 26 references. (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 387 765

An English Classroom-Based Approach for Connecting College-Bound Sophomores to the World of Work

by

Margery Marcus

Cluster 60

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. Marcus

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

A Practicum II Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

1995

CG026574

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Fannie Johnson

Fannie Johnson

Assistant Principal

Title

7201 W. Sample Rd., Coral Springs, FL 33065

Address

6/28/95

Date

This practicum report was submitted by Margery Marcus under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved:

July 25, 1995
Date of Final Approval of Report

William E. Anderson
William Anderson, Ed.D.,
Adviser

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The success of this practicum was dependent upon the support and cooperation of many people. I want to thank high school principal Bruce Wagar for creating an environment that invites problem solving. Assistant principal Nell Sapp deserves a special thanks for minimizing the red tape usually associated with high school field trips. I will be forever indebted to my teammates for embracing--and enhancing--my efforts.

With deepest gratitude, I would like to acknowledge practicum advisor Dr. William Anderson for guiding me through two practicum experiences. Thank you to Nova Southeastern for allowing me the opportunity to work with a professional of Dr. Anderson's stature. Dr. Sapp and her staff deserve recognition as well, for their availability and willingness to answer questions.

There are no words to describe sufficiently the love and support I receive on a daily basis from my husband Ron, my daughter Jillian, and my parents, Ida and Ed Levine. I have been blessed both personally and professionally.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENT		iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS		iv
LIST OF TABLES		v
ABSTRACT		vi
Chapter		
I	INTRODUCTION	1
	Description of Community	1
	Writer's Work Setting and Role	1
II	STUDY OF THE PROBLEM	4
	Problem Description	4
	Problem Documentation	5
	Causative Analysis	6
	Relationship of the Problem to the Literature	8
III	ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS	12
	Goals and Expectations	12
	Expected Outcomes	12
	Measurement of Outcomes	13
IV	SOLUTION STRATEGY	15
	Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions	15
	Description of Selected Solution	21
	Report of Action Taken	23
V	RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	31
	Results	31
	Discussion	35
	Recommendations	47
	Dissemination	47

Page

REFERENCES. 49

Appendices

A EXPLORING YOUR FUTURE 51

B RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING REASONS FOR STUDENTS' CAREER CHOICES 53

C RUBRIC FOR SCORING STUDENTS' JOURNAL ENTRIES FOR REALISTIC DESCRIPTION 56

D EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS PORTFOLIO GUIDELINE AND RUBRIC 58

E PARENTS' SURVEY 62

F SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 64

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1 Quantum Leap Students' Pre-Implementation Career Choices 6

2 Quantum Leap Students' Post-Implementation Career Choices 33

ABSTRACT

An English Classroom-Based Approach for Connecting College-Bound Sophomores to the World of Work. Marcus, Margery, 1995: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Career Education/ Secondary School/Vocational Education/Internships

This practicum was designed to help college-bound sophomores make connections between English class and the world of work so that they could make informed decisions about college and career choices. The target population was 90 honors-level tenth grade English students on an interdisciplinary team. The setting was a predominately middle class, suburban high school.

The writer used a combination of strategies to connect students to the workforce. She designed a shadowing program matching students for a day with career professionals, developed an employability skills portfolio model, organized an in-school Career Day, and arranged for students to access software matching their interests to college options.

Analysis of the data revealed students' ability to cite career choices based on reasons other than prestige and media stereotypes. Additionally, they were able to describe realistically a typical day in the career of their choice, and to document at least eight skills necessary to success in English and success in the workplace.

****

Permission Statement

As a student in the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies, I do (x) do not ( ) give permission to Nova Southeastern University to distribute copies of this practicum report on request from interested individuals. It is my understanding that Nova Southeastern University will not charge for this dissemination except to cover the costs of microfiching, handling, and mailing of the materials.

Aug. 9, 1995 — Margery Marcus

Date — Signature

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

This practicum was implemented in a comprehensive high school serving a predominately middle class community in southeastern Florida. The average family income in this suburb of 85,000 is $48,500, making it one of the wealthiest communities in the state. Particularly known for its fine schools, the community attracts many professionals willing to commute to surrounding cities so their children can attend local schools here. Since education is highly valued, parents support neighborhood schools actively through fund-raising and other volunteer efforts.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The high school in which the writer teaches English is 21 years old, the oldest of the community's three high schools. The school enrolls approximately 2,000 students, 72% Caucasian, 14% Black, 10% Hispanic, 3% Asian, and 1% other. Fifty percent of its student body continues on to attend 4-year colleges. The school's drop-out rate is 1.72%, lower than the county average of 2.88% and the state average of 3.87%. Less than 2% of the student body participates in the free or reduced lunch program. One

principal, five assistant administrators, 93 full-time faculty, and 32 support staff serve the student body. Despite large classes and countywide cutbacks, teacher morale is high, due largely to a good humored principal whose shrewd management style and dynamic personality endear him to his faculty.

The high school offers a variety of vocational and academic programs; the latter divided into three tracks--skills, regular, and honors/gifted. Last year, Quantum Leap was created as an accelerated program for honors and gifted freshmen. It combines four core content areas (American Literature, American History, Chemistry, and Algebra II) in an interdisciplinary format, a relatively innovative concept for a high school as traditional as the one in which the writer teaches.

The writer, who holds a BA in English and a MEd in Curriculum and Instruction, has been an English teacher for 18 years. Aside from a one-year stint in middle school, her teaching career has been in high schools. During the 1994-1995 school year, she taught one section of regular-level World Literature, and four sections of tenth grade Quantum Leap English. The 90 Quantum Leap students were scheduled in two 2-hour blocks of time, facilitating the planning of team enrichment activities, such as guest speakers and field trips. The school's departmentalized English curriculum necessitates the teaching of thinking skills, writing

skills, research skills, and vocabulary development. Quantum Leap students, and their parents, expect a rich, technology-infused curriculum featuring rigorous content, alternative assessments, and personalized instruction.

Aside from her teaching duties, the writer is an active member of the school's Coalition of Essential Schools study team. Meeting monthly during the school year, the team discussed the benefits and drawbacks inherent in becoming a member of the Coalition of Essential Schools. Last year, the writer was one of three teachers from her school to attend the national Coalition conference in Louisville, Kentucky. In August of 1994, she attended a 5-day countywide Coalition retreat, designed to help teachers facilitate school reform at their home schools.

During her 10 years in Florida, the writer has represented her school as its Teacher of the Year, and her county as its Gifted Teacher of the Year. She has served on several county writing projects, developing curriculum models for gifted English and Humanities courses. Additionally, she has presented numerous county and state workshops for teachers in designing integrated curriculum.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The 90 students in the writer's Quantum Leap English classes represented the most academically-talented sophomores in the school. Most of them chose to enroll in Quantum Leap because of the accelerated nature of the curriculum. One of the initial intents of the program was to provide motivated youngsters with the opportunities to take Advanced Placement courses as sophomores, something rarely done by tenth graders in this county. To this end, 25 out of 90 students enrolled in AP American History (scheduled as part of the team), two enrolled in AP Biology (off the team), and one enrolled in AP Chemistry (off the team). Additionally, 60 out of the 90 students took time-consuming electives, such as Debate, Band, and Orchestra. Every one of the 90 was intent upon going to a competitive 4-year college, and yet these students were naive about career options, their place in the workforce, and the relationship between college and their chosen fields of interest.

At the writer's school, five guidance counselors serve 2,000 students. Out of these five, one is responsible for career counseling, solely limited to vocational students.

College-bound seniors receive periodic advice about application procedures and scholarship deadlines, but underclassmen are left to their own devices to explore career choices. As sophomores, Quantum Leap students were beginning to realize that college, and the workforce, loom ahead. And yet, students had only vague ideas about the world outside the high school classroom. These bright young people saw little connection between academics, English specifically, and the workplace. They were isolated from and ill-informed about the world of work they will eventually join.

Problem Documentation

Students' isolation from and ignorance about the workplace was evidenced in several ways. Students' responses to an informal survey (Appendix A) revealed that most based their career interests on media stereotypes and prestige. For instance, 30 out of 90 students cited medicine as their chosen career (Table 1). Most based their choice on money factors rather than on a desire to ease suffering or conduct research. Similarly, 12 students wanted to be star athletes because "sports are fun" and sports heroes are respected.

Students have unrealistic ideas about what their daily lives will be like in the career of their choice. On a pre-implementation writing assignment, a majority of students could not describe realistically a typical day in

the career of their choice. Vague statements, such as "I'll visit patients in the morning and then play golf in the afternoon," or "I'll call my courtroom to order and try cases" peppered their writing.

Table 1

Quantum Leap Students' Pre-Implementation Career Choices

Career	Males n = 52	Females n = 38
Architecture	2	0
Business	7	0
Computers	3	0
Education	0	1
Engineering	5	0
Law	8	4
Marine Biology	0	1
Medical Arts	12	18
Military	2	0
Music	1	0
Professional Sports	8	4
Theater	0	3
Undecided	4	7

Brief individual interviews with students revealed that few saw a relationship between what goes on in English class and what goes on in the "real world." Students perceived that class activities, such as reading classical works, writing expository themes, and doing research projects were all divorced from reality.

Causative Analysis

The diverse causes of the problem are rooted in a combination of factors ranging from the curricular tradition

of segregating vocational and academic programs to students' own inexperience in the workplace. The writer's college-bound students were cut off from career guidance, since this guidance is offered only in vocational classes, perceived as time wasters by many students and their parents. Vocational courses, stigmatized from their association with marginal students, have little appeal for motivated, college-bound students. Even if students expressed an interest in vocational offerings, school scheduling of academic classes would prohibit their enrolling. Cooperative educational and vocational courses are often scheduled in large blocks of time, conflicting with the two 2-hour blocks of Quantum Leap classes.

The English curriculum itself is partially responsible for students feeling unconnected to the world outside the classroom. Last year's Quantum Leap curriculum, while interdisciplinary in nature, focused primarily on the works of the ancient Greeks and Shakespeare, without connecting the universal nature of these works to students' lives. Writing instruction concentrated on the five paragraph analytical essay, forcing students to dwell more on form than on content, emphasizing structure over meaning. Students worked independently for the most part, since group assignments were viewed as frivolous.

Students themselves have little experience in the workplace on which to base important career decisions.

Twenty out of 90 Quantum Leap students worked, and those who did were employed in minimum wage jobs which bore no resemblance to those they will eventually hold. Many had only the vaguest notions of their parents' work, and aside from where their parents work, could not articulate what their parents do at work. Most students admitted they had never actually spoken with a professional (outside of a family member) in a career of interest to them, and all admitted gaining most of their ideas about careers from television and the movies.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Professionals have written extensively about the problem, noting the long-standing schism between academics and vocational courses which discourages college-bound students from exploring career options in vocational programs (Aring, 1993; Borow, 1975; Douglas, 1972; From School to Work, 1990). In this country, vocational education has not been able to overcome its association with marginal students, stemming from its inception as social service programs for drop-outs (Borow; From School to Work). Career education, often a component of vocational courses, suffers from the same stigma, and is often viewed as anti-intellectual and frivolous by college-bound students and their parents (Aring; Borow; Hoyt, 1975; London, Lee, & Manuele, 1985).

The perception of vocational and academic classes as separate from one another is further heightened in most schools by their physical isolation from one another (Douglas, 1992). In the writer's school, for instance, most vocational classes are confined to one wing housing home economics, business, and marketing classes. An academically-tracked student might never, in 4 years, have an occasion to walk down this hallway. The same holds true for academic teachers who are equally segregated from their vocational education counterparts. Douglas notes that academic teachers may share the same prejudices against vocational courses as do college-bound parents and their children. Vocational teachers may view content area teachers as pompous (Douglas), while academic teachers may see vocational education as a threat to the liberal arts (Aring, 1993).

The dearth of career counseling in schools also contributes to the problem. Grubb (1992) and Hansen (1993) note that such counseling has all but vanished in schools today. Guidance counselors, overburdened with other duties, have little time to offer such direction. In the writer's school, for instance, counseling duties are confined primarily to registering and scheduling students. Each counselor is responsible for approximately 400 students, a number impossible to serve in other than a triage function. With guidance counselors unable to offer career direction,

these duties then fall to academic teachers who may be unwilling or unable to help students chart a career course (Grubb, 1992; Packer, 1992; Wirtz, 1975). Most academics have little experience outside school settings and lack firsthand experience about what it takes to succeed in the business world (Grubb; Packer). For instance, of the 20 English teachers in the writer's department, two have worked in fields other than education. Additionally, some academic teachers may have philosophical objections to assuming the role of career counselor, believing that schools should not be concerned with preparing students for work (Aring, 1993). Many teachers in the writer's school are unwilling to assume the burden of career counseling, seeing it as an interesting, but not critical, addition to an already crammed curriculum.

Most teens today, even those who work, are totally separated from the careers they will eventually pursue (Aring, 1993; Grubb, 1992; O'Neil, 1992). Child labor laws and post-graduation schooling keep students from joining the workforce until later adolescence or beyond (Borow, 1975; O'Neil; Stern, Raby, & Dayton, 1992; Wirtz, 1975). This late entry is compounded by the United States' lack of an apprenticeship system; indeed, it is the only industrialized nation in the world without a formal school-to-work transition program for students (Aring; From School to Work, 1990; Gardner, 1991; O'Neil). According to Borow, isolating

teens from their future careers creates anxiety and misconceptions about work, particularly among the college-bound whose entry into the job market is delayed even further by advanced schooling.

Interestingly, the fact that most American teens are primarily in the company of other teens contributes to their ignorance of the marketplace (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1992). Teens, then, do not hear about the work experiences of other adults, and even have vague ideas of what their parents do for a living.

School, itself, perpetuates the dichotomy between academics and the "real world" by ignoring the fact that students work (Carton, 1984). Since most academic teachers have not worked in the business world, they do not do a good job of connecting their content area to the world outside the classroom (Grubb, 1992), increasing students' perception that school and work are divorced from each other. This perception is heightened by employers who never ask to see students' grades as part of the job interview process (Packer, 1992; Stern, Raby, & Dayton, 1992).

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The following goals and outcomes were projected for this practicum. At the completion of the practicum, students will make connections between English class and the world of work. Additionally, they will increase their knowledge about the workplace, enabling them to make informed decisions about future coursework, college choices, and careers.

Expected Outcomes

1. A post-implementation questionnaire will show that 50 out of 75 sophomores will cite career preferences based upon reasons unrelated to prestige or media stereotypes.

2. Students' career journal entries will show that 75 out of 90 sophomores will be able to describe realistically a typical day in the career of their choice, earning at least a "Superior" on a rubric designed to measure detail and accuracy.

3. Students' employability portfolios will show that 50 out of 50 students will be able to document at least three skills common to success in English class and success in the workplace.

Measurement of Outcomes

At the conclusion of implementation, the writer will ask students to complete the open-ended survey she administered before implementation. Using a rubric she designed (Appendix B) to measure students' growing awareness of the importance of making informed career choices, the writer will evaluate students' answers. The rubric categorizes students' answers into five levels: from "Exemplary" to below-minimal. She anticipates that 50 out of 75 sophomores will earn at least a "Superior" (above average) on the rubric, citing career preferences based on reasons other than prestige or media-reinforced stereotypes.

Throughout the practicum students will be required to keep career journals, recording their observations and insights on careers during the implementation period. They will be given specific writing assignments to complete in their journals, and they will be required to keep a record of their research, interviews with career professionals, and notations during their field experiences. Before implementation began, students' essays had revealed that most tenth graders could not realistically describe a typical day in the career of their choice. At the conclusion of implementation, students will be assigned a similar journal entry, which will be judged on the basis of a rubric designed by the writer to evaluate students' ability to describe in detail a day in the workplace

(Appendix C). She anticipates that 75 out of 90 sophomores will be able to describe realistically a typical day in the career of their choice, earning at least a "Superior" (above average) on a rubric designed to measure detail and accuracy.

At the onset of the practicum, the employability portfolio will be explained to students, who will be required to document their skills in the three areas defined in the assignment: academic skills, personal management skills, and interpersonal skills. Additionally, during their focused shadowing experience, students will observe and record the use of these skills in the workplace. At the conclusion of the practicum, students' portfolios will be evaluated according to a rubric designed by the writer (Appendix D), who expects that 50 out of 50 students will be able to document at least three skills common to success in English class and success in the world of work.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

College-bound students are isolated from and ill-informed about the world of work they will eventually join. The literature suggests many solutions for solving this problem.

Career education programs are one way to help all students plan their future in a high stress world (France, 1990; Hansen, 1993; Hoyt, 1975; Jesser, 1976; London, Lee, & Manuele, 1985). College-bound students, while not going directly into the workplace, would profit from programs helping them to understand the importance of choosing the right colleges based on their career interests (Hoyt). Career education programs have been shown to increase students' information base about future work options and to raise their level of career aspirations (London, Lee, & Manuele). According to Hollinger (1991), gifted girls, in particular, would profit from programs tailored to broaden their career interests. Citing research showing that gifted females lower their career aspirations in adolescence, Hollinger notes the importance of creating programs to allow them to explore occupations which fit their talents. Hansen writes that polls show that parents and students want more

career guidance in schools. Her counseling-centered approach to career awareness focuses on integrating career education into developmental guidance programs. Wirtz (1975) recommends that all high school students should have at least five hours of career guidance and counseling.

Integrating academics and vocational curricula is one way for schools to provide students with real world skills (Aring, 1993; Goodlad, 1985; Grubb, 1992; O'Neil, 1992; Stemmer, Brown, & Smith, 1992; Stern, Raby, & Dayton, 1992). Academic and vocational teachers working together can design curriculum linking the classroom to the real world, helping to reduce the gulf that separates these two divisions in high schools (Douglas, 1992; O'Neil). Douglas suggests a number of ways to integrate academics and vocational studies, including requiring all students to take vocational classes as part of the core curriculum, and creating teams of academic and vocational teachers.

The creation of career academies has been one way educators have attempted to combine academics with vocational interests (Grubb, 1992; Rosenfeld, 1991; Stern, Raby, & Dayton, 1992). Academies, magnet school-within-a-school programs, team academic and vocational teachers and feature rigorous curriculum geared to preparing students for a specific field. Since the business community has close ties to academies, students are provided with a context for learning, connecting school and work in ways that

traditional high school programs do not (Grubb). The National Academy Foundation (NAF), for instance, in partnership with 25 school districts nationwide (including the writer's), sponsors the Academy of Public Service, the Academy of Finance, and the Academy of Travel and Tourism, among others, connecting school and work (Rosenfeld). Rosenfeld cites NAF statistics showing that out of the 619 graduates of academy programs in 1990, 92.5% went on to 2-year or 4-year colleges, compared to 59% of the graduates of traditional high school programs.

Daggett (1993), noting the business community's vested interest in today's graduates, stresses the importance of helping all students develop the sophisticated technological skills now needed in the workplace. His call for educational reform centers on expanding Tech Prep/Applied Academics programs as a way to help students identify and then develop the skills for successful employment and lifelong learning. For Daggett, such programs would begin in middle school, integrating vocational and academic curricula, and stressing the application of acquired knowledge to the workplace.

Apprenticeship programs modeled after those in Germany and Japan can ease students into the workplace and offer them job experiences which can aid them in making career decisions (Aring, 1993; Gardner, 1991; Hamilton & Hamilton, 1992; Wirtz, 1975). Gardner notes that apprenticeships give

learning context. He advocates students working with an adult expert over long periods of time, observing and building skills guided by an accomplished professional. For Gardner and Hamilton and Hamilton, apprenticeships go beyond vocational accomplishment; they facilitate an adolescent's transition into adulthood.

Internships and mentoring relationships can provide students with important career direction (Hartman, 1993; Reidy & Schottmueller, 1993; Wirtz, 1975). Examples of successful efforts to link school with students' career interests include Rochester, New York's School Without Walls (Hartman), Indianapolis' Science Mentor Program (Waltner, 1992), and Missouri's Community Learning Program (Reidy & Schottmueller).

Portfolios documenting students' growth over time may be another way of linking the classroom to the workplace. The Employability Skills Portfolio, for instance, requires students to identify and document those skills necessary for success both in the classroom and the workplace (Stemmer, Brown, & Smith, 1992). Students must provide evidence of their skills in three areas--academic, personal management, and interpersonal--and must, furthermore, create an education plan to map out their future coursework and career path (Stemmer, Brown, & Smith).

The writer has gleaned many ideas from reviewing the literature. It is important for the curriculum to reflect

the connections between the classroom and the workplace in order to enable students to perceive a link between academics and their future careers. The English curriculum, then, could be revamped to include resume´ writing, technical writing, research papers on careers, job interviewing skills, and assignments requiring teamwork and collaboration. Students would benefit from hearing speakers in both traditional and non-traditional jobs, and students could interview people in the community to learn more about the skills which overlap school and work. Special emphasis could be placed on students developing and practicing reading, writing, speaking, and collaboration skills necessary for success in the real world.

The writer can help students make the connections between their abilities and values and their future goals. She can arrange for the county's guidance department to administer and score a battery of aptitude tests, and she can invite a professional career consultant to speak to students about the importance of matching interests and goals. Additionally, students would benefit from speaking to people who have made major career changes.

Most of the writer's students, and their parents, are unaware of the number of educational options available to students with specific talents, interests, and abilities. The writer can provide her students with information about county career academies and Tech Prep programs which might

interest motivated students who already have a specific career direction in mind.

Students' current schedules may be able to accommodate several days in the workplace if on-site visits are scheduled as school field trips. The Quantum Leap parent body, as well as other team teachers, should prove a valuable resource for implementing a shadowing program. Since students benefit from each other's experiences and insights, they could be required to make an oral presentation to the team about their shadowing experiences. Team teachers could help develop guidelines for student exhibitions to the entire team.

Given the writer's role and responsibilities in her work setting, several solutions suggested by the literature are clearly workable, while others are beyond her scope of authority. For instance, while the writer can easily provide students with information about local career academies, designing and starting one would be beyond her power base. Similarly, while the literature touts apprenticeships as particularly meaningful ways of linking students with the workplace, establishing such a program falls outside the writer's ken. The writer does have the freedom, however, to design lessons incorporating real world skills into her English curriculum. She is free to require students to maintain portfolios, keep journals, and interview professionals in careers of interest to students.

Her ties to the county's guidance office will allow her to arrange aptitude testing for students, and her access to her parent body, rich in expertise, will enable her to develop a student shadowing program.

Description of Selected Solution

The writer implemented a combination of solutions which resulted in students increasing their knowledge about careers, while making connections between English class and the workplace. The writer designed and implemented a program enabling students to shadow a professional in the field of the student's choice during the school day. The shadowing focused on recording those specific skills which link English to the workplace. Students were required to record their experiences in their career journals for a team exhibition at the conclusion of implementation. The writer solicited the Quantum Leap parent body, school alumni, and the neighboring business community to host students for a day. This solution was inspired by the literature advocating internship and mentorship programs for students. Since the scheduling of college-bound students prohibited them from participating in on-site field experiences during the day, a shadowing day as part of the English curriculum allowed them to sample the workplace. The focused shadowing experience acted as an introduction to the career world students will enter in the future. It also allowed students to make adult contacts in a career of their choice, and it

cemented the relationship between English class and work as they observed and recorded the ways in which work and the classroom are connected.

The writer organized an in-school program featuring panels of speakers in both traditional and non-traditional careers. Since the literature reflects that students spend most of their time in the company of their peers, meeting adults who work in a variety of settings will increase students' knowledge base about work options. Ever mindful of research on the effect of gender-bias on girls, the writer was particularly concerned about the career aspirations of her bright female students. Introducing them to role models in non-traditional careers may introduce them to careers they had never before considered. Additionally, teachers on the writer's team want students to meet professionals in careers related to history, chemistry, and math.

The literature reflects that students need to be aware of the transferability of skills from the classroom to the workplace. To this end, the writer used the employability portfolio concept to enable students to identify and document those academic, personal management, and interpersonal skills common to success in school and the workplace. The portfolio reinforced the connection between English and work and served as an assessment of what students had learned about the connectedness of school and

work. In order to help students identify their abilities and interests, the writer arranged for the county guidance office to administer vocational aptitude tests to students. Students also learned to use Discover software to match their career interests and abilities with appropriate college options.

Report of Action Taken

Throughout the 8-month implementation period, the writer integrated her practicum into the English curriculum so that the workplace became a natural extension of the classroom. Her emphasis on writing, interviewing, researching, and presentation skills focused students on the connections between school and work.

The groundwork for the months ahead was laid during the first 4 weeks of implementation. She introduced her practicum by engaging students in a discussion about their future. After an animated lesson in which students shared their ambitions and fears about their adult lives, she assigned a homework project asking students to create a collage depicting themselves 10 years in the future. Students had one week to complete their collages, which were then mounted on the walls of the classroom. Along with this visual assignment, students were required to begin keeping a career journal to record their insights and observations about themselves in relation to their goals and career

choices. Throughout implementation, they were given specific journal assignments to complete.

During these first 4 weeks, the writer also initiated contact with students' parents in order to call upon their expertise later in the year. Surveys (Appendix E) went home with students, soliciting parent participation. Parents were asked to note their occupation and their willingness to serve on a career panel or to host a student in the workplace for a day. The writer ensured a high return rate by offering students extra credit for returning completed surveys promptly. The information gathered by these surveys became a valuable data bank later on.

The writer tapped into district resources early in implementation by arranging for the county's Testing and Evaluation Service to provide students, free-of-charge, with the DAT/ii Career Interest Inventory. The test, which took students three class periods to complete, was then returned to the county for scoring. The county made good on its assurance to have test scores for students within the coming month.

Weeks 5 and 6 were spent focusing on the employability skills model designed by the writer to help students identify those skills which transfer from English class into the workplace. Here the writer was able to tap into the resources of her school's guidance department, which proved a valuable ally during implementation. The school's

vocational education counselor provided every Quantum Leap II student with a bright blue career planning folder. The writer distributed these folders during week 5 and introduced them as an organizational tool in which students were to keep their career journal entries, resumés, interviews, research notes, and other career-related materials. During week 6, the writer distributed the Employability Skills Portfolio Guideline and Rubric (Appendix D) and oriented students to its use. Students, for instance, were asked to document a specific instance in which they demonstrated their ability to access and interpret research in English class. The lesson, which focused primarily on classroom skills, would be extended later in implementation to include workplace skills.

Instruction week 7 included work on resumés. Students were given several model resumés and required to develop their own reflecting their current achievements. Excitement was generated in week 8 by the return of the career tests from the county. Students received individual printouts detailing their aptitudes for specific careers. Students shared their career profiles with one another and then stored them in their blue career portfolios.

Week 9 the writer assigned students a mini-research project in which they were to identify and interview a professional in a career they wanted to know more about. Students were given 3 weeks to complete the assignment,

which was to be either taped or written. By week 10, it became clear that students, however bright and enthusiastic, needed help in making contacts with people in the workplace. Weeks 10, 11, and 12, then, were spent guiding students through the interview process. As a class, they brainstormed interview questions (Appendix F), and suggested possible interview choices for each other. Here, the survey completed by parents became useful, since the writer often consulted it to aid students in identifying interview subjects. Additionally, during these weeks, the writer taught several lessons modeling telephone interviewing techniques. The interview assignment, due during week 13, proved well worth the time. Students made valuable contacts they would use later to arrange for their shadowing experiences.

During weeks 13 through 16, the writer called upon her fellow team teachers for help in organizing a panel of professionals in a variety of careers. Her teammates responded by offering their energies and expertise. The team spent several weeks contacting professionals (including Quantum Leap parents) and making arrangements for Career Day, scheduled during week 18. The school's guidance department proved valuable once again during these weeks. The writer asked the guidance director for help in teaching her students how to use the Discover program, a software application which matches students' career interests with

college programs. Not only did he teach the writer's classes how to use the software, but he allowed the writer to keep two Discover-application computers in her classroom for the duration of the practicum. Students had daily access to the software and were required to include one Discover print-out in their career folders.

By week 17, students were ready to be introduced to the field experience opportunity which would allow them to shadow someone in the field of their choice. The writer worked with students to help them identify and contact people in fields which were accessible to them. The writer met with school administrators this week to facilitate the cumbersome red tape which accompanies all field trip efforts.

While the writer had originally envisioned students shadowing later in implementation (beginning week 22), students' enthusiasm for the undertaking and willingness to make their own arrangements, prompted her to allow them into the field beginning week 19. Before the first students shadowed, however, the writer reinforced the use of the Employability Skills Portfolio in the workplace. Students had previously focused on using the guideline to document classroom skills; now, the writer demonstrated its use in the field. Students were to take the guide with them during their shadowing experience and note specifically where these skills were used in the workplace. Additionally, students

were to record their on-site observations for a detailed accounting in their career journals of a typical day in the career of their choice.

Career Day was held during week 18. The team organized the day so that students heard three speakers in each of their four team classes. Twelve Career Day speakers were allotted 20 minutes each to talk about their professions and answer students' questions. The following day, students were asked to evaluate the Career Day experience in the journals.

During weeks 19 through 26, students went into the field for their focused shadowing experience. Classroom activities followed up field experiences with emphasis upon students recording journal entries, completing the documentation required by the Employability Skills forms, and writing thank you notes to their hosts in the field. Week 26, students received their exhibition guidelines. They were to demonstrate their knowledge of their chosen career by hosting a Career Fair for students in other classes. They were to construct an exhibit booth in the media center reflecting what they had gleaned on the job. Weeks 27 and 28 focused on readying exhibitions for the following week.

Patterned after the county's science fairs, the Career Fair was held during week 29, and attended by school administrators and over 300 students. Fairgoers went from

booth to booth meeting Quantum Leap students dressed as professionals in their field. Guests received brochures designed by Quantum Leap students explaining their careers and viewed colorful backboards constructed by students as a visual display of their knowledge.

Week 30, the writer asked students to evaluate the Career Fair project in their journals. She also gave them time in class to complete their career folders and submit them for grading. Each student's folder was to include a resume', a Discover print-out, an interview with a professional in the field, a completely documented Employability Skills Guideline form, the DAT Career Interest Inventory, and career journal entries. Additionally, the pre-implementation survey (Appendix A) was administered again to students as a post-implementation measure. It was also to be included in students' folders.

During weeks 31 and 32, the writer evaluated students' folders. She focused, in particular, on students' responses to the pre/post implementation survey, the Employability Skills Portfolio Guideline, and their journal entries describing a typical day on the job. Using the rubrics she had developed, the writer assessed students' growth, and then returned the folders to their owners.

On the last day of school, the writer asked her Quantum Leap classes to reflect back over the year and to name the one area of study which they had enjoyed the most. Students

were unanimous in naming their workplace studies as the most exciting and meaningful.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

Results

Students in the writer's four honors-level sophomore English classes were isolated from and ill-informed about the world of work they will eventually join. The writer employed a combination of solutions to solve the problem. She designed a shadowing program for students, matching them for a day with professionals in fields of students' interests. The shadowing focused on recording those specific skills linking English class and the workplace. The writer developed an employability portfolio model to enable students to identify and document academic, personal management, and interpersonal skills common to success in school and the workplace. She organized an in-school Career Day featuring speakers in traditional and non-traditional fields. The writer administered a standardized vocational aptitude test to students, and arranged for them to access Discover software in order to match their career interests and abilities with appropriate college options.

The first outcome of the practicum stated that a post-implementation questionnaire will show that 50 out of 75 sophomores will cite career preferences based upon reasons unrelated to prestige or media stereotypes. This outcome

was achieved beyond the writer's expectations. Data collected from the post-implementation questionnaire revealed that 75 out of 75 sophomores went beyond prestige and stereotypes in naming career choices, earning at least a "Superior" (above-average) on the rubric designed by the writer to analyze students' reasons. Fifty students out of 75 surpassed the writer's expectations, earning an "Exemplary" (excellent) on the rubric for their mature insights into the relationship between their career choice and their specific talents and interests. The remaining 25 earned a "Superior" rating.

Students' experiences interviewing, meeting, and shadowing professionals resulted in several students changing their minds about their future careers (Table 2). For instance, prior to implementation, 12 students chose professional athletics as a career, citing glamour and money as chief attractions. Eleven of these 12 students changed their minds based on their implementation experiences. All 11 noted that other careers were more realistic choices for them based on a hard look at their talents and drive. Prior to implementation, no males and one female expressed an interest in education. After implementation, three males and five females chose education as a future career, citing reasons such as their love of children and the positive impact that teachers had had on their own lives.

Pre-implementation, most of the 30 students who had noted medicine as their chosen career, cited money as their primary motivation. Post-implementation, the students noting medicine as their future career, went beyond prestige and money in citing reasons for their choice. They named their desire to help people, their love of scientific research, or their willingness to work long hours in order to make a critical difference in people's lives. Two female students, previously undecided about careers, found direction during implementation. One cited her talent for food presentation, and the other a passion for Renaissance art, as reasons for choosing food preparation and museum curating, respectively, as realistic career options for themselves.

Table 2

Quantum Leap Students' Post-Implementation Career Choices

	Males n=52	Females n=38
Architecture	4	0
Business	7	0
Computers	4	0
Education	3	5
Engineering	5	0
Food Preparation	0	1
Law	9	7
Marine Biology	1	1
Medical Arts	14	17
Museum Curating	0	1
Professional Sports	1	0
Theater	1	2
Undecided	3	4

The second outcome projected that students' career journals will show that 75 out of 90 sophomores will be able to describe realistically a typical day in the career of their choice, earning at least a "Superior" (above-average) on a rubric designed to measure detail and accuracy. This outcome was achieved beyond the writer's expectations. Out of the 90 students enrolled in the writer's classes last year, 80 earned at least a "Superior" on the rubric. All 80 students had participated in a shadowing day and were thus able to write detailed, realistic descriptions from firsthand experience. Seventy out of the 80 students exceeded the writer's expectations by earning an "Exemplary" (excellent) on the rubric, while 10 earned a "Superior."

The practicum's third outcome stated that students' employability portfolios will show that 50 out of 50 students will be able to document at least three skills common to success in English class and the workplace. This outcome was achieved beyond the writer's expectations. All 50 students were able to document at least eight skills necessary for success in class and the workplace. Every one of the 50 students recorded the importance of speaking articulately, planning in advance, following instructions, using technology, working as a team, writing clearly, meeting deadlines, and thinking analytically, as skills common to academics and the workplace. Indeed, all of the

80 students who spent a day in the field cited a similar number of connections between school and work.

Discussion

The success of the practicum validates those researchers who stress the importance of connecting high school students to the workforce (Aring, 1993; Borow, 1975; Douglas, 1992). In particular, the career education of college-bound students is typically ignored (Aring; Douglas; London, Lee, & Manuele, 1985) in favor of the seemingly more pressing needs of vocational students. When the writer began to stress the connections between school and work for her honors-level sophomores, they showed more enthusiasm for English class than ever before. For them, class developed an immediacy beyond reading classics and studying SAT vocabulary.

At first the writer was concerned that the practicum might not integrate naturally into the curriculum, since academic and vocational-oriented programs have traditionally been separate from one another (Aring, 1993; Douglas, 1992; From School to Work, 1990; Hoyt, 1975; London, Lee, & Manuele, 1985). This concern soon vanished, however, in light of all the practicum activities directly related to satisfying the county English curriculum frameworks stressing writing, speaking, and researching skills. For 8 months, part or all of each class was devoted to career-related activities, and students were able to easily segue

from updating their career folders to the more traditional aspects of the English curriculum.

The early weeks of implementation were spent laying the groundwork for what would follow. The collage assignment, for instance, focused students on the future, and the collages hanging on classroom walls served as a colorful backdrop for the rest of our studies. Similarly, by administering the career aptitude test early in the practicum, the writer reinforced the concept that one's work should be related to one's interests and abilities. By gathering data from parents in the early stages of implementation, the writer invited parental participation and informed parents about future class activities. Parental involvement proved crucial later to the success of Career Day and the shadowing experience.

Because career education has all but vanished in high schools (Grubb, 1992; Hansen, 1993), students had previously received no instruction in a task as basic as resumé writing. The lessons on resumé writing were timed to coincide with a call for applications to the National Honor Society, a prestigious school organization which grants membership based on academic accomplishment and extra-curricular activities. Students immediately saw the importance of a resumé to document these accomplishments. As students set to work committing their scholastic profiles to paper, several of them realized they had little to show

for nearly two years in high school. One young man struggled for a while with the section devoted to community service, realizing that he had never performed one selfless, service-oriented act. He admitted this privately to the writer who furnished him with a list of school-based service organizations. To his credit, this student joined the Key Club, and by the end of the school year had earned enough service hours to be considered for National Honor Society membership next year. His mother called the writer to thank her for providing such positive direction. She had been encouraging her son for a year to become involved extra-curricularly, but it took the resume assignment to make him realize his shortcoming.

The assignment requiring students to interview a career professional made the writer realize how much instruction students needed in making contact with the world outside the classroom. She naively assumed that students would know how to contact people and how to conduct an interview. Hamilton and Hamilton (1992) note that most American teens spend their time primarily in the company of other teens. They have little experience talking with adults outside of their family or school setting. The writer's students were no exception. The day after receiving the interview assignment, students began to bombard the writer with questions, making it clear that additional instruction was necessary. First, the writer and her students brainstormed

a list of questions for students to take to the interview. Of course, the number one question that everyone wanted to ask was "How much money do you make?" The writer suggested a more tactful approach: "How much money can someone in your field expect to earn?" Together, the writer and her students listed 10 questions to get students started. Even this preparation was not 100% effective, however, in preparing all students. The writer received a call from a museum curator who had just been interviewed by a Quantum Leap student. The curator laughingly noted that the first thing the students said in beginning the interview was, "I don't know what I'm supposed to ask you."

Students also needed instruction in telephone manners, particularly in how to introduce themselves to secretaries acting as gatekeepers on behalf of their bosses. The writer provided students with a written script and taught a lesson in which students role played landing a phone interview. Since some students were more comfortable writing a letter asking for an interview, the writer offered instruction here too. Students identified someone in the community to interview, wrote a letter asking for an interview appointment, and followed up with a phone call. This technique proved so successful that students adopted it to secure shadowing experiences as well.

Some students' interview wishes were challenges. Here, the parents' survey was very helpful in the interview

assignment. Students stumped for an interviewee in a field of their choice were able to consult the parents' list and proceed accordingly. While most students were able to make their own interview arrangements, the writer had to help a few. She was able to direct the would-be forensics pathologist to the county coroner who obliged with a face-to-face interview. The writer matched an aspiring opera singer with a voice professor at a local university. Their interview was so successful, that the students began taking voice lessons from the professor.

The student who was proudest of her interview accomplishment, however, was the young lady who spent nearly 30 minutes in a one-on-one taped interview with former-Governor-and-presidential-candidate Michael Dukkakis. The students, dedicated to a career in politics, had read in the paper that Dukkakis would be speaking at a local university. Arriving at the lecture early, she explained her assignment to one of Dukkakis' aides, who arranged the interview.

Among the writer's most valuable resources were the teachers on her team. When the writer sought their help in planning Career Day, they volunteered as much time and energy as the writer needed. While the writer knew what she wanted to accomplish, it took a team effort to realize successful results. Each teacher on the team volunteered to contact three speakers; as it turned out, the history and math teachers secured the bulk of the guest speakers,

relying on their contacts and on the Quantum Leap parent body. It was the math teacher who came up with a rotating schedule, allowing for three guest speakers in each Quantum Leap class throughout the day. In this way, students were able to hear all 12 speakers.

Mindful of the research on the importance of introducing gifted girls to non-traditional role models (Hollinger, 1991), the writer had hoped to include many successful women on the panels. Accepting her invitation was a female lawyer, a female judge, and a female addictions therapist. The other female speaker was a stewardess. Male speakers included a fertility specialist, a private detective, a chiropractor, an audiologist, a commercial printer, a sheriff, an industrial design manager, and a trends forecast specialist. Of the 12 speakers, 7 were team parents. While the writer was disappointed in having so few non-traditional role models for female students, she took comfort in the fact that both students and team teachers agreed that Career Day was the most rewarding and exciting day of the school year.

An impressive body of literature recommends apprenticeships and mentoring programs for providing a context for learning (Aring, 1993; Gardner, 1991; Hartman, 1993; Reidy & Schottmueller, 1993; Wirtz, 1975). The shadowing program designed by the writer connected students for a day with possible future careers. Students'

enthusiasm for the shadowing experience prompted the writer to allow students into the field earlier than she had anticipated. Students began making their own arrangements, calling upon people they had interviewed, neighbors, relatives, and even names picked from the phone book.

The writer had previously worked out field trip arrangements through her administrative liaison. It was agreed that the writer would submit an individual request form for each student; each form would then be signed by the administrator in charge of off-campus trips. These forms were a necessity, since it was important that the shadowing be considered a field trip, not an absence. Completing paperwork for 80 students was daunting for all concerned, but school administrators were so supportive of the writer's efforts, they readily complied with all her requests. Without the high degree of administrative cooperation she received, the writer could not have accomplished such positive results during implementation.

Parental support was another critical component during the shadowing experience. Over 30 students wanted to shadow doctors. Several made their own contacts by calling upon family doctors; five students successfully connected with doctors by picking their names from the phone book. It soon became clear, however, that the writer needed help in placing students with physicians. To this end, she called upon a parent (the fertility specialist who had spoken at

Career Day), enlisting his help in matching students with his colleagues. Through him, over 20 students experienced a typical workday with a doctor. Three students even scrubbed up and watched surgery performed in a hospital operating room.

Matching students with judges also proved difficult, until the writer approached a parent (the lawyer who spoke at Career Day) for help. The lawyer called upon judges she knew and succeeded in arranging shadowing experiences for 12 students. The county courthouse, nearly a 45-minute ride from school, is a bustling place which could easily intimidate students. Therefore, those students shadowing judges were allowed to go in pairs. The parents of two students did not feel comfortable allowing their children to go downtown unsupervised. They were invited, of course, to accompany their children on the assigned day.

As a teacher, and a parent herself, the writer felt deeply the responsibility entailed with sending students out into the field. She was particularly concerned about one young man who had made a contact with an architect through the phone book. Over the phone, the student had engaged him in an in-depth discussion about the field, and then asked if he could shadow him for a day; the architect readily agreed. The writer, however, did not feel comfortable with the arrangement. She neither knew the architect nor anyone who knew him. The writer called the boy's parents and suggested

they meet the architect prior to their son's shadowing. They did, and the writer felt much more comfortable about the ensuing shadowing day.

Originally, the writer wanted to mandate shadowing for all 90 Quantum Leap students. It became clear, however, that shadowing could not be required. Students had to secure their own transportation to and from the workplace. Students who did not drive or who did not have access to a car had to rely upon family members to transport them. Eight students were unable to participate in the shadowing experience because of transportation difficulties. Additionally, two students refused to compromise on the setting for their shadowing experience. One young man insisted that he would shadow only a television news anchor, while one young lady insisted on spending a day with a pilot. Both refused to compromise, and so deprived themselves of a field experience, even in a field of their second choice.

Following their on-site visits, students were required to write thank-you notes to their hosts. Students again needed much more supervision and direction here than the writer had anticipated. Students resisted writing thank-yous, arguing that they had said "thank you," which they felt should suffice. At the writer's insistence, students wrote notes but these were perfunctory, at best. Next year, when implementing this program again, the writer will make

writing thank-you notes an integral part of the curriculum, so that students do not perceive this important follow-up as merely an add-on element.

The Career Fair served as the final synthesis of what students had learned throughout implementation. Students were required to construct a colorful backboard about their chosen career, design brochures detailing important career information, dress as a professional in the field, and prepare an informal presentation for fairgoers who questioned them about their experiences. The Fair was held during a 2-hour block of time in the school's media center. Invited guests (administrators and 300 English students) wandered from booth to booth, receiving handouts, and talking with Quantum Leap students about their experiences. Students were nearly as enthusiastic about the Career Fair as they were about Career Day. The latter rated higher, students admitted, because they did not have to prepare for it. One student wrote in her journal that Career Day required her to listen, while the Career Fair required her to work.

This practicum produced several unexpected outcomes. The writer was astonished at the number of career education resources available in the county, and saddened by the realization that theses resources are untapped by academic teachers. The schism that exists between academics and vocational education is noted by the literature (Aring,

1993; Borow, 1975; Hoyt, 1975; London, Lee, & Manuele, 1985). Clearly this rift deprives students and teachers of each other's knowledge. The county's Career Education division encouraged the writer throughout the practicum, directing her to the Testing and Evaluation Center, who gladly supplied and scored the career aptitude tests. The writer shared her newly-found information with many of her colleagues, two of whom used the DAT/ii Career Interest Inventory with their own students.

The interest shown by counselors in her own school's guidance department was unexpected. The writer's guidance director generously gave his time (and software) to the writer, and the school counselor in charge of vocational education kept the writer supplied with newspaper supplements focusing on careers. Additionally, he included the writer's classes on a field trip to the countywide Career Expo sponsored by the school system.

The most unexpected event, however, was derived directly out of students' shadowing experiences. Students, enthused about their day in the field, voiced a desire for continuing their connections to the workforce. To this end, the writer, armed with the work of Gardner (1991), Hamilton and Hamilton (1992), Daggett (1993), and Aring (1993), and buoyed by the success of the practicum, approached the principal about offering a course allowing students to intern rather than merely shadow for a day. County

guidelines, the writer discovered, list a course called Executive Internship, which would accommodate students seeking such an in-depth experience. The principal readily agreed to including the Executive Internship in the curriculum guide, and 60 students chose it as a course selection. The writer's practicum has thus been institutionalized at her school; she teaches two sections of Executive Internship in 1995-1996.

Students, desperate for a real-world connection, embraced implementation activities with an enthusiasm rarely seen by the writer in her 18 years of teaching. Their career journals reflected their growth as they moved through the stages of the practicum. In meeting and talking to professionals, students expanded their career sights. As the world outside the classroom became real for them, they sobered in their approach to school and to their future. Students grew to realize that the choices they make must be based on their own abilities, not media hype. They polished their writing, speaking, and presentation skills in authentic settings outside the classroom, with people other than their relatives or teachers. The separation between school and "real life" dissolved as students saw the connections between life in the classroom and life in the workplace.

The success of the practicum reinforces for the writer the importance of teamwork. As students realized the

importance of cooperation in the field, the writer realized it in her work setting. The support of county personnel, the principal and other administrators, the Quantum Leap parent body, and her teammates, contributed to the success of the practicum. The power of this practicum lay in its ability to make connections, not only between school and work, but among people who care about giving learning real contexts.

Recommendations

Based on the writer's experiences implementing this practicum, three recommendations seem appropriate.

1. From the start, seek administrative cooperation at all levels. A many-faceted program such as this one would be impossible to implement without administrative support.

2. Plan selectively so that other important components of the English curriculum are not neglected.

3. Integrate follow-up activities, such as writing thank-you notes, into the curriculum to emphasize their importance.

Dissemination

The successful results of the practicum have already been shared with administrators and teachers on the county level. In March, the writer led two sections of a Coalition of Essential Schools' county workshop. Entitled "Connecting Students to the World of Work via English," the writer's

workshop guided teachers in ways to connect school and work. The writer explained her practicum, distributed rubrics, and shared samples of students' collages and journal assignments. Participants' responses were so positive, the writer submitted a roundtable proposal to the Coalition of Essential School's Fall Forum, the organization's national conference. Her proposal was accepted, and the writer will disseminate her practicum results nationally in November. She also intends to submit workshop proposals to the National Council of Teachers of English and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

School reform movements recently have focused on giving learning authentic contexts, the very basis of the writer's practicum. The writer is now working on a journal article describing the success of her practicum. If the local response to her work is any indication, she should find a publisher for her work.

REFERENCES

American Association of University Women. (1992). How schools shortchange girls: A study of major findings on girls and education. Washington, DC: AAUW Educational Foundation and National Education Association.

Aring, M. K. (1993). What the 'v' word is costing America's economy. Phi Delta Kappan, 74, 396-404.

Borow, H. (1975). Career guidance in America: Heritage and promise. In M. L. Barlow (Ed.), The philosophy for quality vocational programs (pp. 146-180). Washington, DC: American Vocation Association.

Carton, M. (1984). Education and the world of work. Paris, France: UNESCO.

Daggett, W. R. (1993, Winter). Answering the call for school reform. The Balance Sheet, 2-3.

Douglas, A. M. (1992). Mending the rift between academic and vocational education. Educational Leadership, 49(6), 42-43.

France, M. H. (1990). Toward tomorrow: Career education for the secondary school. Guidance and Counseling, 6, 14-24.

From school to work. (1990). Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Gardner, H. (1991). The unschooled mind. NY: Basic Books.

Goodlad, J. I. (1985). A place called school: Prospects for the future. NY: McGraw Hill.

Grubb, W. N. (1992). Giving high schools an occupational focus. Educational Leadership, 49(6), 36-37, 40-43.

Hamilton, S. F., & Hamilton, M. A. (1992). A progress report on apprenticeships. Educational Leadership, 49(6), 44-47.

Hansen, L. S. (1993). Career development trends and issues in the United States. Journal of Career Development, 20(1), 7-24.

Hartman, E. (1993). A change of course. Phi Delta Kappan, 74, 405-406.

Hollinger, C. L. (1991). Facilitating the career development of gifted young women. Roeper Review, 13(3), 135-139.

Hoyt, K. B. (1975). Career education: Contributions to an evolving concept. Salt Lake City, UT: Olympus Publishing.

Jesser, D. L. (1976). Career education: A priority of the chief state school officers. Salt Lake City, UT: Olympus Publishing.

London, C. B., Lee, M. L., & Manuele, C. A. (1985). Career decision making: A fundamental goal for students in a post-industrial democracy. College Student Journal, 19, 283-287.

O'Neil, J. (1992). Preparing for the changing workplace. Educational Leadership, 49(6), 24-31.

Packer, A. H. (1992). Taking action on the SCANS report. Educational Leadership, 49(6), 27-31.

Reidy, J., & Schottmueller, J. (1993). Trying out careers. Educational Leadership, 50(7), 46-47.

Rosenfeld, N. S. (1991). The career connection. American Educator, 15(2), 24-42.

Stemmer, P., Brown, B., & Smith, C. (1992). The employability skills portfolio. Educational Leadership, 49(6), 32-35.

Stern, R., Raby, M., & Dayton, C. (1992). Career academies: Partnerships for reconstructing American high schools. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Waltner, J. C. (1992). Learning from scientists at work. Educational Leadership. 49(6), 48-52.

Wirtz, W. (1975). The boundless resource. Washington, DC: New Republic Book Co.

APPENDIX A

EXPLORING YOUR FUTURE

APPENDIX A

EXPLORING YOUR FUTURE

Name: _____

Exploring Your Future

1. Projecting yourself into your own future, in what career do you see yourself?

2. Why have you chosen this career? Explain your reasons in as much detail as you can.

APPENDIX B

RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING REASONS FOR STUDENTS' CAREER CHOICES

APPENDIX B

RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING REASONS FOR STUDENTS' CAREER CHOICES

Level 4 Exemplary

In citing reasons for their career preferences, students are consistent and focused. Their reasons contain insights into their awareness of themselves, as well as their awareness of the specific talents and abilities needed for the field of their choice. Students cite reasons for their choices based on a variety of evidence including, but not limited to, reading, research, interviews with professionals, on-site visits, and personal observation. Exemplary papers exhibit students' insights into their own growth, and offer specific examples which highlight their understanding of the importance of making career decisions based on valid reasons transcending prestige and stereotypes.

Level 3 Superior

In citing reasons for their career preferences, students are focused but offer occasionally inconsistent reasons for their choices. Students cite reasons based on a limited variety of evidence. They connect their values, talents, and abilities to career goals, and provide evidence to support their claims. Students reflect an awareness of themselves and of the importance of making wise career choices. Students note their own growth in general terms.

Level 2 Competent

In citing reasons for their career preferences, students frequently offer inconsistent reasons. Their evidence is based primarily on personal observations confined to their on-site visit. Students connect their values, talents, and abilities to career choices without offering specific documentation. Students articulate the importance of making wise choices, but fail to support their ideas with convincing evidence. Students note their own growth in general terms.

APPENDIX B

Level 1 Minimal

In citing reasons for their career preferences, students offer evidence based on personal observations not necessarily grounded in their own experience. Career choices are loosely related to students' skills and abilities, with no evidence given to support choices. Students' reasons are based primarily on prestige and media stereotypes. Little note is taken of the importance of making wise career decisions, and students provide no insights in their own growth.

Level 0 Assignment fails to meet minimal standards.

APPENDIX C

RUBRIC FOR SCORING STUDENTS' JOURNAL ENTRIES
FOR REALISTIC DESCRIPTION

APPENDIX C

RUBRIC FOR SCORING STUDENTS' JOURNAL ENTRIES FOR REALISTIC DESCRIPTION

Level 4 Exemplary

Student adopts a model to record experiences systematically, hour by hour. Student's work reflects a sense of the wholeness of the work day. Observations are focused, accurate and thorough, consistently supported by evidence from the day's experience. The names and titles of professionals in the workplace are included. Student consistently incorporates anecdotal information to enliven the entry. Entry reflects student's efforts at objective recording; judgments and personal biases are minimal.

Level 3 Superior

Student adopts a model to record experiences systematically. The work day is recorded in blocks of several hours, with attention to accuracy and detail. Observations are consistently supported by evidence of a general nature. The names and titles of professionals in the workplace are included. Student frequently includes anecdotal information to enliven the entry. Entry reflects effort at objective recording; judgments and biases are minimal.

Level 2 Competent

Student records the day's experiences in blocks of several hours. Entry may reflect accurate recording, but contains few supporting details. Frequent unsupported generalizations characterize the entry. The names and titles of professionals in the workplace are omitted; anecdotal information is minimal. Student's judgments and biases intrude upon the description.

Level 1 Minimal

Student records the day's events haphazardly with scant attention to chronology. Entry is composed primarily of unsupported generalizations and minimal details which do not accurately reflect the workplace. Student's work is based primarily on judgments and biases.

Level 0 Journal entry fails to meet minimal standards.

APPENDIX D

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS PORTFOLIO GUIDELINE AND RUBRIC

APPENDIX D

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS PORTFOLIO GUIDELINE AND RUBRIC

To the student: Record the evidence that displays your skill in the appropriate category, then place the documents which support the evidence in your career folder. Where applicable, note where you observed this skill practiced in the workplace during your on-site visit.

Academic Skills:	English Class	Workplace
Possesses writing skills		
Speaks articulately		
Possesses analytical ability		
Uses technology		
Accesses, reads, and interprets research		
Personal Management Skills:		
Plans in advance		
Meets all deadlines		
Follow instructions		
Work without constant supervision		
Develops and meets goals		

APPENDIX D

Interpersonal Skills:	English Class	Workplace
Functions responsibly on a team		
Offers and accepts constructive criticism		
Compromises when necessary		
Leads as well as follows		

APPENDIX D

Classroom skills in the workplace:

Level 4 Exemplary: You have observed and described 8-10 of these skills in the workplace.

Level 3 Superior: You have observed and described 5-7 of these skills in the workplace.

Level 2 Competent: You have observed and described 3-4 of these skills in the workplace.

Level 1 Minimal: You have observed and described 1-2 of these skills in the workplace.

APPENDIX E

PARENTS' SURVEY

APPENDIX E

PARENTS' SURVEY

Dear Parents,

Sophomore year is a time of enormous growth for our young people. Students begin to make connections between school and their career aspirations, college, and the workplace they will eventually join.

Quantum Leap English (and the rest of the team, as well) wants to help connect students to the world of work. This year, as part of our curriculum, we plan to help students investigate career options, connecting their interests and aptitudes to college choices. As part of this program, we plan to host a Career Day featuring panels of professionals in traditional and non-traditional careers. We also would like to arrange for students to spend a day shadowing someone in the career of the student's choice.

Now, here's where we need your help. If you would be willing to serve on one of our career panels, or if you could host a student for a day, please complete the form below. (Our on-site visits will be in the spring.)

Your child's name: _____

Mother's name: _____ Occupation:_____

Place of employment: _____
City: _____

Depending upon scheduling, would you be able to serve on a career panel? Yes _____ No _____

Would you be able to host a student for a day at your work site? Yes _____ No _____

Father's name: _____ Occupation:_____

Place of employment:_____
City:_____

Depending upon scheduling, would you be able to serve on a career panel? Yes _____ No _____

Would you be able to host a student for a day at your work site? Yes _____ No _____

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Quantum Leap II

Sample Interview Questions:

1. What made you decide to enter this particular field?

2. Would you advise youngsters today to enter your field?

3. Do you find your job personally rewarding?

4. Describe a typical day in your field.

5. What are the major drawbacks of your job?

6. What do you like most about your job? What do you like least?

7. What educational background do you need for your field?

8. What kind of annual income and fringe benefits are possible in your field?

9. What courses in high school and college helped prepare you to succeed in your field?

10. If you could do it all over again, would you select the same career?